

November 30, 2011

The Honorable Governor Jack Dalrymple
Governor of North Dakota
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505-0001

Dear Governor Dalrymple:

The Governor's Committee on Aging is comprised of representation from the eight Governor's Regions of the State and representation from the Tribal Nations. The Committee is set forth in the Older Americans Act of 1965 and North Dakota Century Code 50-60. The Governor's Committee on Aging acts as an advisory body to the Aging Services Division of the Department of Human Services, as an educational body on issues relating to the elderly, and as a body that attempts to motivate different local and state entities to develop as well as strengthen services that are needed by older persons in North Dakota.

During the past twelve months the Committee focused primarily on education, exploring what services might help older persons remain in their own homes as long as possible, strengthening services, and increasing public access to the Governor's Committee on Aging so we could become more aware of the services that might be needed by seniors.

In order to increase public access to the Governor's Committee on Aging we met in various communities throughout the State. We published notice of our meetings in the local newspaper and invited people to attend. Unfortunately we did not have many people attend. In October the Governor's Committee had a booth at the Northern Plains Conference in Fargo. Again the purpose was to promote the availability of the Committee and share its purpose so that people would know that they have an entity that could receive their concerns that relate to the needs of elderly North Dakotans.

In regard to our educational activities we were a participating sponsor in one statewide educational forum and presented regional educational forums throughout the State. Thank you, Governor Dalrymple, for declaring November as Caregivers Month. Keeping with this declaration the Committee co-sponsored with the Family Caregiver Support Program to provide eight training sessions throughout the State for caregivers.

The Committee developed and arranged for educational forums in Bismarck, Dickinson, Devil's Lake, Carrington, and Grand Forks. The topics included Rural Health and Health Care Reform, Affordable Health Care Act, Health Care Fraud, Healthy Eye Care, Crimes Against the Elderly, Advanced Care Directives, Stroke Prevention, Strengthening Social Security, Age Appropriate Health Care Screening, Depression and Aging, Reducing Risk Factors for Crohn's Disease, as well as a few other health related issues. Attendance varied from 50 to up to nearly 200 people at the various sites.

The Committee has chosen the following topics for discussion/study: 1) evaluate the feasibility of using staff from Assisted Living Facilities to provide in-home care services to older persons; 2) transportation issues; 3) housing issues; 4) the continued implementation of ADRL/Options Counseling; and 5) in-home service needs for older individuals. Upon completion, we will present any findings and recommendations for your review.

Thank you for your continued support in addressing the needs of older North Dakotans.

Respectfully,

Larry Wagner, Chairperson
Governor's Committee on Aging

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